THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION AND TROPICAL MARINE AND COASTAL SITES

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Purpose of presentation

- Introduce WH Convention (briefly)
- introduce Global Strategy for WH
- explain the evaluation of WH nominations
- identify main issues facing the WHC
- highlight aspects of marine environment
- set out IUCN view of challenge to workshop

The World Heritage Convention- basic features

- One of the most important conservation agreements
- covers cultural and natural heritage
- requires State Parties to nominate and protect WH sites
- nominations are reviewed by IUCN (natural) and ICOMOS (cultural)
- decision are taken by the WH Committee
- key test for inscription is Outstanding Universal Value (4 criteria for natural sites)
- inscribed sites can be put on WH in Danger list
- detailed advice given in the WH Operational Guidelines

The World Heritage Convention- progress to date (30 years)

- 164 State Parties
- 690 WH sites, of which:
  - 529 are cultural sites
  - 138 are natural sites
  - 23 are mixed
- WHC has become recognised as key delivery mechanism for biodiversity conservation (e.g. UN Foundation, links to CBD)
- some major conservation successes - e.g. EL Viscaino
- but also 19 natural WH sites on Danger List

The Global Strategy for WH

Aim: to establish a more balanced and representative list of WH Sites

Method:

- •enlist more SPs
- •encourage SPs to prepare tentative lists of upcoming sites
- •develop regional and thematic studies
- •encourage nominations from categories and regions not currently well represented

The Global Strategy for WH (cont.)

Activities to date re natural sites:

- 1982: the World's Great Natural Areas (IUCN)
- 1996: fossil sites overview (Australia)
- 1997: global overviews of WH and 1) wetland and marine areas*, and 2) forests (IUCN)
- 1998: global overview of Human Use of WH sites (IUCN)
- 1998: Tropical Forest workshop (Berastagi) (CIFOR, Indonesia and UNESCO)*
- 2001: Tropical Marine workshop (Philippines) (UNESCO, IUCN, UNEP-WCMC and US/NOAA)

The Global Strategy for WH (cont.)

- 1997: *IUCN Global Overview of WH and Wetland and Marine Areas*: listed 22 tropical coastal and marine areas within which potential WH sites might be found (see annex 1) (areas of search)

- 1998: *Tropical Forest workshop (Berastagi) (CIFOR, Indonesia and UNESCO):* an excellent example of a similar process to that planned for marine workshop. It listed 33 tropical forest areas (1 from each WWF ecoregion) within which potential WH sites might be found (areas of search)

Putting sites on the WH List

- Sites can only be nominated by a SP
- sites must be of OUV
- criteria for natural sites:
  - exceptional geology, geomorphology
  - outstanding ecological and biological processes
  - superlative natural beauty
  - valued natural habitats, inc. endangered species
- also conditions of integrity

Putting sites on the WH List (cont.)

- Natural sites evaluation done by IUCN

- process involves:

  - data sheet from UNEP-WCMC

  - expert reviewers

  - site evaluation

  - IUCN WH Panel peer review agrees IUCN's recommendations

  - presented to WH Committee/Bureau

Putting sites on the WH List (cont.)

- IUCN has to be "as strict as possible"
- it compares sites under criteria (ii) and (iv) with "others in same biogeographic province or migratory pattern"
- some framework for criterion (i), none for (iii)
- also looks at past decisions
- often recommends rejection or deferral
- WH Committee usually agrees with recs.

in brief, it is a tough process

Putting sites on the WH List (cont.)

- But inscription on WH List brings real <u>benefits</u>:
  - enhances status of site, and so increases attention to management and protection
  - may provide access to funds (WH Fund, UN Foundation, GEF etc.)
  - encourages international solidarity in protection
  - attracts international tourists
  - with cross-border WH sites, builds co-operation
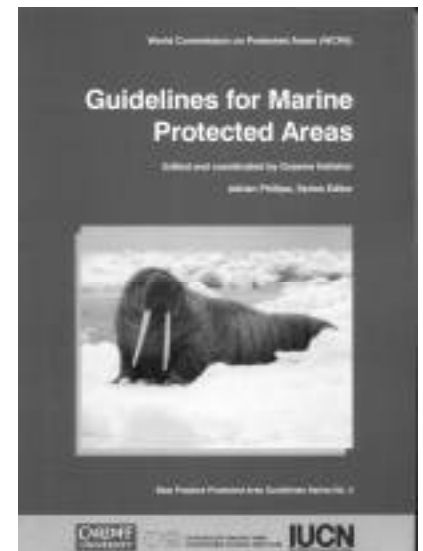
Issues facing the WH Convention

- Imbalance between natural and cultural
- imbalance between terrestrial and marine - *leads to workshop focus*
- balance between adding to list and managing sites
- importance of monitoring and evaluation
- existence of many threats to WH sites

Issues facing the WH Convention (cont.)

- Importance of working with people
- need for capacity building
- single sites v. serial sites
- transboundary WH sites
- linkage with other international agreements

The marine dimension - special aspects

- Need for a biogeographical framework
- WH criteria work and marine environment
- issues of boundaries (landward especially)
- legal aspects (EEZs, navigation, fishing)
- fisheries and tourism sectors
- note IUCN guidance

The Challenge to the Workshop

☑ • Develop scientifically credible framework
  for priority areas (areas of search)

☑ • select list of potential sites

☑ • priority for serial and multi-country sites

  great contribution to Global Strategy, but ….

The Challenge to the Workshop (cont.)

- Need a follow-up strategy to make it happen
- develop network of WH marine experts to assist IUCN and SPs
- address issue of non-SP countries in Pacific, West Africa and Caribbean ….

The Challenge to the Workshop (cont.)

Pacific countries/territories that are <u>not</u> members of the WHC :

- **Cook Islands**
- **Marshall Islands**
- **Micronesia - Federation of Nauru**
- **Palau**
- **Tuvalu**
- **Vanuatu**
- **Tokelau**
- **Tonga**
- **Samoa**

NB this lists only tropical countries/territories with coastlines

The Challenge to the Workshop (cont.)

Caribbean countries/territories that are <u>not</u> members of the WHC :

- Anguilla
- Bahamas
- British Virgin Islands
- Cayman Islands
- Montserrat
- Puerto Rico
- Saint Vincent and Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- West Indies Associate States

NB this lists only tropical countries/territories with coastlines

The Challenge to the Workshop (cont.)

West African countries that are <u>not</u> members of the WHC :

- **Guinea-Bissau**
- **Equatorial Guinea**
- **Liberia**
- **Sahara, Democratic Arab Republic of**
- **Sao Tome and Principe**
- **Sierra Leone**

NB this lists only tropical countries with coastlines

The Challenge to the Workshop (cont.)

Other countries/territories that are <u>not</u> members of the WHC :

- **Brunei Darusallam**
- **Eritrea**
- **Hong Kong SAR(China)**
- **Kuwait**
- **Singapore**
- **Somalia**
- **Taiwan (Province of China)**

NB this lists only tropical countries /territories with coastlines

The Challenge to the Workshop (cont.)

Looking beyond priority selection:

- Encourage use of Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar for "not quite" sites

- provide help in developing WH nominations

- identify what needs to be done to improve WH marine site management

- and what about places of OUV beyond national jurisdiction?

The Challenge to the Workshop (cont.)

Looking forward to the World Parks Congress,
Durban, South Africa, September 2003:

- major focus on marine <u>and</u> on WH themes
- use event to check on post-workshop progress
- get involved in planning the WPC through IUCN/WCPA marine programme

Conclusions

- WORLD HERITAGE CAN GREATLY ASSIST MARINE CONSERVATION
- THE FIRST JOB IS TO FIND THE SITES BUT ...
- THAT IS ONLY THE START